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Item 39 of the preliminary list*

**Support by the United Nations system of the efforts
of Governments to promote and consolidate new or
restored democracies**

**Letter dated 14 April 1999 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the
Permanent Mission of Djibouti to the United Nations addressed to the
Secretary-General**

I have the honour to transmit herewith statements by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation and the observer missions of the International Organization of la Francophonie, the Organization of African Unity and the League of Arab States (see annexes) on the presidential election held in Djibouti on 9 April 1999 which, as you are aware, took place without incident.

I should be grateful if you would have the statements circulated as a document of the General Assembly under item 39 of the preliminary list.

(Signed) Badri Ali Bogoreh
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

* A/54/50.



Annex I

Statement by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Djibouti

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation wishes to state that the second pluralist presidential election was held throughout the country on 9 April 1999 without incident.

The people of Djibouti have thus recognized the statesmanship and experience of Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh by entrusting to him, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, the destinies of our nation.

The election of Mr. Ismail Omar Guelleh, who for 22 years was the principal collaborator of the founding father of the nation of Djibouti, Al Hadj Hassan Gouled Aptidon, represents a pledge of continued progress along the road of peace, democracy and national unity and harmony.

The people of Djibouti have once again demonstrated their maturity to the prophets of doom who constantly predicted the imminent outbreak of serious disturbances once the results of the presidential election were announced.

Annex II

Joint statement by the observer missions of the International Organization of la Francophonie, the Organization of African Unity and the League of Arab States on the conduct of the presidential election of 9 April 1999 in the Republic of Djibouti

Further to the request of the Government of the Republic of Djibouti to Mr. Boutros Boutros-Ghali, Secretary-General of the International Organization of la Francophonie, Mr. Salim Ahmed Salim, Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity and Mr. Ahmed Esmat Abdel-Méguid, Secretary-General of the League of Arab States, and pursuant to their decision, three delegations were sent and mounted a combined observer mission to contribute to transparency in the presidential election of 9 April 1999 in the Republic of Djibouti.

The delegations noted how the election was organized in the course of various meetings with the authorities involved in the electoral process.

The delegations also held talks with the two candidates.

Teams formed by the delegations travelled throughout the District of Djibouti as well as to various localities in districts in the interior of the country as staffing permitted (District of Tadjourah: Tadjourah, Sagallou, Kalaf, Ardo, Randa; District of Obock: Khar-Angar, Lahasse; District of Ali-Sabieh: Ali-Sabieh, Gualileh). The teams covered over 100 polling stations of the 211 opened throughout the country.

On the basis of their observation of the organization and conduct of the ballot, the delegations wish to state:

(a) The electoral campaign, which the delegations in part observed, and the presidential election were held within the time-frame established by law and took place without incident;

(b) Electors came out in large numbers to choose their candidate in the secrecy of the polling booths;

(c) Efforts were made to maintain fairness and provide suitable physical conditions for the electors;

(d) The police in attendance confined themselves to maintaining law and order without interfering in the conduct of the ballot;

(e) The printing of polling cards and their distribution to registered voters took place in a completely satisfactory manner;

(f) The counting of the votes for both parties was carried out in a transparent and orderly manner.

Along with these positive comments, the delegations unanimously wish to draw attention to the following point: the opening and closing hours of some polling stations, both in the District of Djibouti and in the interior, were not observed for various reasons:

Late arrival of polling station staff;

Late opening of polling stations;

Contradictory information as to hours;

Insecurity;

Late arrival of materials.

The delegations also noted:

- (a) An evident lack of training of electoral personnel, resulting in:
 - (i) The various stages of the ballot being conducted differently;
 - (ii) Confusion between the role of the representatives of the candidates and that of polling station staff as a result of a lack of awareness of the respective roles;
 - (iii) Failure at some polling stations to request identification in addition to the polling card;
 - (iv) Inappropriate use of electoral materials (failure to use indelible ink, especially in rural areas; non-use/inadequate use of card punch, etc.);
 - (v) Inadequate preparation of the electorate resulting in a lack of familiarity with the use of ballot papers and the polling booth;
- (b) In terms of materials:
 - (i) Use of two types of ballot boxes, transparent in the District of Djibouti and wooden in the interior of the country;
 - (ii) Use of two types of ink: indelible ink in some districts and ordinary ink at some rural polling stations.

In conclusion, the three international observer missions wish to emphasize that, despite shortcomings in the organizational aspects as indicated, the presidential election of 9 April 1999 in the Republic of Djibouti took place in conditions in which transparency, impartiality and fairness prevailed. The delegations wish to thank the authorities and people of the Republic of Djibouti for the welcome and facilities placed at their disposal throughout their mission.
